

## GENERAL ALGER'S RECORD.

THE WAR DEPARTMENT FURNISHES THE OFFICIAL EVIDENCE OF HIS GALLANT SERVICES IN THE WAR FOR THE UNION.

General Custer's Unfavorable Report Proven to Have Been Utterly Unfounded and Cruelly Unjust.

THE ORIGINAL HOSPITAL CERTIFICATE SHOWING ALGER IN THE HOSPITAL FROM AUG. 30 TO SEPT. 5, 1864.

General Alger's Army Record Absolutely Regular and Without a Single Flaw From the Beginning to the End.

THE STRONGEST RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HIS PROMOTION BY HIS SUPERIOR OFFICERS THROUGHOUT HIS SERVICE.

The Official Records in the War Department a Splendid Tribute to Alger's Bravery and Faithfulness to Every Duty.

The recent attack of the New York Sun upon the military record of General Russell A. Alger has of course attracted national attention and THE TRIBUNE is gratified to be able to show, from the official records, its cruel injustice. General Alger's gallant service as a soldier in the war for the union has been for a quarter of a century a matter of the widest public knowledge, and General Alger has himself enjoyed the esteem and affection of his army comrades of all ranks during the whole of that period. Those who were his superior officers while he was in his country's service have constantly testified their regard for him as a soldier and citizen, and his Grand Army comrades have bestowed upon him the highest compliment within their gift by electing him amid great enthusiasm to be commander-in-chief of the Grand Army of the Republic—the grandest organization of patriots that the world has ever seen. General Alger's comrades in the army knew him for a brave soldier who never shirked a duty, who was always at the front in the face of every danger, and whose gallant service in the field won for him promotion after promotion. He was repeatedly recommended for more distinguished promotion than could be given him during his time of service, and he was in all respects a faithful soldier who did his duty without expectation of other reward than the consciousness of having served his country in its hour of peril.

What is above stated is fact as to General Alger's military service. It will not be controverted or disbelieved by any man who served in the union army or who had personal knowledge of General Alger's military career. But now, twenty-eight years after he had been honorably discharged from his country's service in the field, an eastern newspaper finds a single recommendation which it declares is sufficient to take from Alger all the honors that he won in three long years of gallant fighting. That newspaper is the New York Sun, and on February 11th it printed the editorial which is here quoted:

**The Sun's Statement.**  
What is this about Gen. Russell A. Alger of Michigan as a Republican candidate for President on a platform of Patriotism and Penicillin?  
The various biographies of Gen. Alger dwell more in detail upon the beginning of his military services than on the end. He was Major in the Second Michigan Cavalry, Gen. Sheridan's old regiment. On Oct. 19, 1862, he was promoted to be Lieutenant-Colonel of the Sixth Michigan Cavalry. Subsequently he was transferred to the Fifth Michigan Cavalry and became its Colonel.

In September, 1864, Colonel Alger and his regiment were in the Shenandoah Valley taking part in Sheridan's great campaign against Jubal Early.

About the first of that month Colonel Alger applied for ten days' leave of absence. The application was disapproved and returned by his division commander, General Wesley Merritt, because of the active operations then in progress. Upon the return of his application for leave disapproved, Colonel Alger left his regiment and went to Washington without leave. There he procured a detail on court-martial duty in that city.

This fact was reported to General Merritt, who reported it in turn to General Sheridan, who brought the matter to the attention of the War Department, recommending that Colonel Alger be dishonorably discharged from the service for being absent without leave.

In consequence of that recommendation from Philip H. Sheridan, Colonel Russell A. Alger was discharged from the service on Sept. 20, 1864.

The record does not read that he was "dishonorably discharged." The punishment recommended by General Sheridan was softened, and he was merely discharged. The incident terminated his military career. After the war was over he procured in some way the brevet of brigadier-general and major-general of volunteers.

These facts are not stated in the current

wounded men to Annapolis, and as I said, General Custer's recommendation of him as a great wrong committed upon me and my family. Please ascertain where these records out from the War Department.

**R. A. ALGER.**  
**DR. WOOSTER'S AFFIDAVIT.**  
It shows that the Charge of Absence Without Leave Was False.  
In complete substantiation of all that General Alger says in his dispatch to Major Hopkins THE TRIBUNE printed on February 13th the following affidavit by Dr. Samuel R. Wooster, who was General Custer's brigade surgeon at the time covered by the charge made by the New York Sun. Dr. Wooster is well-known in Michigan as an honorable citizen and highly esteemed for his services during the war. His affidavit is in these words:

General: I enlisted as assistant surgeon of the Eighth Michigan Infantry, Aug. 19, 1861, was promoted to surgeon of the First Michigan Cavalry, Feb. 26, 1863, and was mustered out Oct. 18, 1864. The First Cavalry was one of Custer's Michigan Cavalry Brigades. During the campaign of 1863 and 1864 and up to the time of my discharge from the service I was acting brigade surgeon on General Custer's staff.

At the battle of Shepherdstown, Virginia, at which I was present, and where we were forced to retire across the Potomac on account of the great strength of the enemy, I know that General Alger, then Colonel Alger of the Fifth Michigan Cavalry, commanding his own and Sixth Michigan Cavalry, was detailed to protect the crossing of the balance of the command with the artillery and train, which he accomplished.

During the campaign General Alger's health was much impaired, and the night after our crossing into Maryland from Shepherdstown he was very ill. The following morning as we were gathering the sick and wounded together to send to the hospital, I informed Colonel Alger that he was not able to march and must go to the hospital. This was customary for surgeons in the field to do when the command was on the march. I accordingly directed Colonel Alger to send to Annapolis with others, and I distinctly remember that I told him I would forward the proper papers to him there, as we wished to get the sick and wounded away at once.

**Wooster Made the Application.**  
I made application for the proper order General Custer reporting the fact, and supposed it was granted, and never heard to the contrary until yesterday. In my opinion there never was a more unjust act committed against a soldier than that which is reported to have been committed by General Custer in reporting him absent without leave and recommending his dismissal.

All who knew General Alger in the war knew he was very prompt and punctual in his duties, and he would have been one of the last men in the world to disobey an order or fail to perform his duties.

If there is any person responsible for his being sent to hospital, it is the proper order accompanying him, I am that person. Will you do General Alger and me the justice to file this sworn statement with his war record in your office?

I have the honor to be, general, Very respectfully, your obedient servant,  
(Signed) Dr. Samuel R. Wooster.  
Late Surgeon 1st Michigan Cavalry, Actg. Brigade Surgeon, GENERAL J. C. KELTON, Adjutant-General U. S. Army, Washington, D. C.

**STATE OF MICHIGAN.**  
County of Wayne, ss.  
Samuel R. Wooster, being duly sworn, deposes and says that the above statement is true in substance and fact.

**THE AFFIDAVIT IN THE RECORDS.**  
The following official communication shows the action taken by the War Department relative to Dr. Wooster's affidavit quoted above:  
WAR DEPARTMENT, Washington City, Feb. 19, 1892.

General Russell A. Alger: Sir—Referring to your communication of the 12th instant, addressed to the Adjutant General, enclosing an affidavit relative to your military record made by Dr. S. R. Wooster of Grand Rapids, Mich., late a Surgeon 1st Michigan Cavalry, I am directed by the Secretary of War to inform you that, in compliance with your request, the affidavit of Dr. Wooster has been placed upon the files of this Department in connection with other papers relating to your military record.

Very respectfully,  
(Signed) P. C. AINSWORTH, Major and Surgeon U. S. Army.

**THE OFFICIAL RECORD.**  
The War Department's Exact Copy of General Alger's Record on Its Files.  
Through the courtesy of the Secretary of War THE TRIBUNE is now able to make public the entire official record of General Alger's military career, or at least the portion of it that has any bearing upon the charge brought by the New York paper which has so unjustly attacked him. The record was put in possession of THE TRIBUNE by General Alger just as he was leaving for California on the 8th instant to attend to his lumbering interests in that State. Every document printed in the official copy furnished by the War Department may be verified by reference to the originals on file at Washington. In this connection we print the following extract from a letter written by Major F. C. Ainsworth to General Alger:

**Alger's Record "Highly Creditable."**  
WAR DEPARTMENT, Washington City, Feb. 18, 1892.  
To the Honorable the Secretary of War: Sir—Referring to your conversation with me yesterday relative to the military record of General Alger, I beg to say that I have carefully examined that record and find so much in it that is highly creditable to him that I am convinced that the publication of the whole and the whole of it would be connected therewith would be of decided advantage to General Alger, in view of the recently published articles concerning him. It is doubly so in the case of a man who is fully justified as to the character of his record, and the advisability of furnishing him a transcript of it, or of corresponding with him with reference to it. I respectfully suggested for your consideration. Very respectfully,  
(Signed) F. C. AINSWORTH, Major and Surgeon U. S. Army.

Major Ainsworth's suggestion was approved by the Secretary of War, and the entire record is now in THE TRIBUNE'S possession. A synopsis of it has already been published in these columns, but we append below the chronological statement just furnished by the War Department.

**The Record Complete.**  
Russell A. Alger was mustered in as captain, Company M, 1st Michigan Cavalry, Sept. 2, 1861. (He enlisted Aug. 19, 1861.)

On July 12, 1863, he applied for a leave of absence for 30 days on a medical certificate, as follows:

ment of Michigan Cavalry, having applied for a certificate on which to ground an application for leave of absence. I do hereby certify that I have carefully examined this certificate and find that it is a true and correct copy of the original, and that the same is in accordance with the provisions of the act of Congress, approved March 3, 1879, relating to the medical service of the army. I have the honor to be, very respectfully,  
(Signed) R. A. ALGER, Colonel.

He reported present on roll of Field & Staff for September, 1862, as Major, but there is no record of his muster in as of that grade. He tendered his resignation as Major Second Michigan Cavalry October 27, 1862, to enable him to accept the Lieutenant Colonelcy of the 6th Michigan Cavalry. His resignation was accepted to date October 27, 1862.

Russell A. Alger was mustered in as Lieutenant Colonel 6th Michigan Cavalry, to date October 30, 1862, for three years, and is reported on rolls of Field & Staff of regiment as present to April 1, 1863. And on roll of June 30, 1863, he is reported promoted Colonel of the 5th Michigan Cavalry.

He was mustered in as Colonel, 5th Michigan Cavalry, to date July 1, 1863, at Annapolis, D. C., and is reported present on roll dated June 30, 1863. Roll of Field & Staff dated Aug. 30, 1863, reports him absent in Michigan, without leave.

Casualty sheet of 2d Brigade, 3d Division Cavalry Corps, Army of the Potomac, signed by General Kilpatrick, reports Colonel Alger wounded July 18, 1863, at Boonsboro, Md., another signed by General G. A. Custer, gives the place of casualty as Funkstown, Md. July 11, 1863, the following certificate appears in his case:

**MEDICAL CERTIFICATE.**  
Col. R. A. Alger, of the 5th Regiment of Michigan Cavalry, having applied for a certificate on which to ground an application for leave of absence, I do hereby certify that I have carefully examined this certificate and find that it is a true and correct copy of the original, and that the same is in accordance with the provisions of the act of Congress, approved March 3, 1879, relating to the medical service of the army. I have the honor to be, very respectfully,  
(Signed) G. A. CUSTER, General.

Roll dated October 31, 1863, reports him present on duty at Washington, D. C., and is reported promoted Colonel of the 5th Michigan Cavalry, to date October 31, 1863. Roll of Field & Staff dated June 30, 1864, reports him present, and that dated August 31, 1864, reports him as follows: Absent, without leave, from July 1, 1864, to August 1, 1864. See hospital certificate in another column showing that Alger was in hospital from August 30 to September 5, 1864. See also hospital certificate in another column showing that Alger was in hospital from August 30 to September 5, 1864. See also hospital certificate in another column showing that Alger was in hospital from August 30 to September 5, 1864.

September 16, 1864, Colonel Alger tendered his resignation from this city, and the same was accepted September 20, 1864, in Special Order No. 24, of that date, from the War Department, Adjutant General's office.

On the day Colonel Alger tendered his resignation in this city, General George A. Custer forwarded a communication from his headquarters, through the proper military channels, in which he stated that Colonel Alger was in hospital at Annapolis, Md., and after having been refused a leave of absence, and that he had directed that the colonel be reported absent without leave on the muster rolls of his regiment.

This was forwarded to Brig. Gen. Major-General Torbert, who recommended Colonel Alger's dismissal, which recommendation having been forwarded by Major-General Sheridan to the War Department, he received the same date that Colonel Alger's resignation was accepted.

On September 17, 1864, the Adjutant General notified General Sheridan that Colonel Alger had been honorably discharged from the service September 20, 1864, in orders from the War Department.

It is proper to add that Brigadier-General George A. Custer recommended Colonel Alger for promotion to Brigadier General in 1863, and for brevet in 1864.

The records further show that Colonel Russell A. Alger was breveted Brigadier General United States Volunteers to date from June 11, 1865, for gallant and meritorious services during the war.

**AS TO ALGER'S ABSENCE.**  
Re was Only Absent Twice Except After the Battle of Boonsboro.  
One of the statements made in General Custer's astonishing recommendation of September 16, 1864, which will be quoted in full, was that Colonel Alger had, two or three times previous to this, applied for a leave of absence, when in my opinion he was fit for duty. Bearing upon this point we print the official record:

**HEADQUARTERS 5TH MICHIGAN CAVALRY, IN THE FIELD.**  
Colonel: I respectfully ask permission to be sent to hospital at Washington for reasons stated in surgeon's certificate herewith attached. I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,  
(Signed) R. A. ALGER, Colonel, 5th Michigan Cavalry.  
Lieutenant Colonel Kingsbury, Asst. Adj. General, Cav. Corps.

**The Surgeon's Certificate.**  
Colonel Russell A. Alger having applied for a certificate on which to ground an application to report for medical treatment, I hereby certify that I have carefully examined this certificate and find that it is a true and correct copy of the original, and that the same is in accordance with the provisions of the act of Congress, approved March 3, 1879, relating to the medical service of the army. I have the honor to be, very respectfully,  
(Signed) R. A. ALGER, Colonel, 5th Michigan Cavalry.

Approved and respectfully forwarded,  
(Signed) W. MERRITT, Brig. Gen. Comdg. 1st Cavalry Division.

**The Order Issued.**  
The following was issued Sept. 18, 1864:  
HEADQUARTERS CAVALRY CORPS, May 22, 1864.

Special Orders, No. 134.  
3. Upon the recommendation of the Medical Director, the following named officer will proceed to Washington and report for treatment to Surgeon R. O. Abbott.

COLONEL ALGER, 5th Michigan Cavalry.

By command of, Maj. Gen. Sheridan,

Asst. Adj. General.

In pursuance of this order, Colonel Alger proceeded to Washington and reported for treatment. The surgeon's certificate shows that he was ill and that it was nothing to indicate the slightest purpose on his part to shirk duty. This was the first occasion on which Colonel Alger ever made application for leave of absence on account of sickness except after the battle of Boonsboro, in 1863.

The only other time he was ordered to relieve on account of sickness or any other cause was at the time when the following document was received:

**HEADQUARTERS, 5TH MICH. CAVALRY, IN THE FIELD.**  
Aug. 12, 1864.

Colonel: I have the honor to report for

duty and to make the following explanation of my absence from my command.  
By permission of Brig. Gen. Custer while at Washington I remained behind the brigade and was ordered to report at Harper's Ferry on the 9th inst., which I failed to do by failing to comply with the morning train at Washington on the 9th by being misinformed as to its time of starting. I arrived at Harper's Ferry on the morning of the 10th inst. and was unable to find transportation until evening of the same date, my horses having been forwarded with the regiment.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully,  
(Signed) R. A. ALGER, Colonel.  
CAPT. L. W. BARNHART, A. A. Genl., 1 Brig. 1 Div. Cavalry.

Respectfully forwarded,  
(Signed) G. A. Custer, Brig. Genl.  
Not until eight days later was the following recommendation made:  
Hd. Qrs. 1st Cav. Div'n, Aug. 20, 1864.

Respectfully reported to Brig. Gen. Custer for his opinion as to whether further action is necessary in this matter.  
By command of, Brig. Gen. Merritt, A. A. Genl., 1 Brig. 1 Div. Cavalry.

Nearly a whole month elapsed before General Custer made the recommendation which follows, Col. Alger having been with his regiment until Aug. 28, when he went into hospital at Annapolis.

**HEADQUARTERS 1ST BRIG. 1ST DIV. CAV. MIL. DIV.,**  
Sept. 16th, 1864.  
Respectfully forwarded. Not deeming this officer's explanation of his absence to be based on good grounds, it is evidently being sent to the War Department for its consideration. I am of the opinion that "further action" should be taken in his case.  
(Signed) G. A. CUSTER, Brig. Genl., Comdg. Brig.

**Custer's Astonishing Report.**  
Following this endorsement came General Custer's report, which is the basis of the New York Sun's attack upon General Alger, and we print it entire, with all of the endorsements thereon, exactly as it comes from the War Department:  
HEADQUARTERS 1ST BRIG. 1ST DIV. CAV., 1st Div. Cavalry, Sept. 16, 1864.

In compliance with the instructions of the War Department, the Division Commander has the honor to submit the following report in the case of Col. R. A. Alger, 5th Michigan Cavalry, stating the time at which he left the command for the purpose of what authority, and his present whereabouts. Col. Alger left this command the morning of the 28th of August, as it marched toward Harper's Ferry to join the division near Halloway. He has been absent since that date. I was not aware of his absence until this brigade halted to feed near Halloway, when Asst. Surg. St. Clair of the 1st Mich. Cavalry informed me that Col. Alger, owing to some indisposition, had remained at a house in Harper's Ferry. At the same time Asst. Surg. St. Clair presented for my approval an application from Col. Alger for leave of absence for twenty days. As Col. Alger had two or three times previous to this, applied for a similar leave of absence, and my opinion he was fit for duty and which opinion subsequently proved to be correct as it has in the case now referred to, I returned Col. Alger's application without my approval. He left this command without authority, and after having been refused a leave of absence from these Headquarters. And I have directed that he be reported absent without leave on the muster rolls of his regiment. Respectfully submitted,  
(Signed) G. A. CUSTER, Brig. Genl. Comdg. Brig.

HEADQUARTERS 1ST CAV. DIV., September 17th, 1864.  
Respectfully forwarded for the action of the Chief of Cavalry. The case mentioned within is the third in which Col. Alger has absented himself from the command without proper authority since the commencement of the present year's campaign. Severe measures should be taken to prevent a recurrence of this evil.

(Signed) W. MERRITT, Brig. Gen. Comdg. HEADQUARTERS 1ST CAV. DIV., Sept. 17, 1864.  
Respectfully forwarded with the recommendation that he be dismissed from the service for absence without authority, subject to the approval of the President. Such measures should be taken to prevent a recurrence of this evil.  
(Signed) A. T. A. TORBERT, Bvt. Maj. Genl. and Chief of Cavalry, HEADQUARTERS MIDDLE MILITARY DIVISION, Sept. 18, 1864.

Respectfully forwarded. I understand that Colonel Alger is at this time at Washington, but it is evident he has left his command without authority, and it appears that he has done so before. I have always considered Colonel Alger a good officer but cannot excuse his conduct or withhold my approval of the recommendation of his immediate commanders.

(Signed) P. B. SHERIDAN, WAR DEPARTMENT, Maj. Gen., Sept. 23, 1864.  
Respectfully returned. This officer was honorably discharged from the service by S. O. 311, Sept. 20, 1864, from the 5th Michigan Cavalry.  
(Signed) THOMAS M. VINCENT, Asst. Adj. General.

**A MONSTROUS INJUSTICE.**  
Proof That Above Report and Recommendations Were Unjust and Malicious.  
It is not possible to fitly characterize the injustice done to General—then Colonel—Alger in the report and recommendations printed above. They had no result, for Colonel Alger, being in entire and absolute ignorance of them, presented his resignation on the 16th of September, 1864, for reasons which were amply stated in the document itself, and as it was accepted he was honorably discharged from the service at that time. The entire report and recommendation, which was tendered upon September 16th, must be said here that General Alger did not know until twenty-four years later that such adverse recommendations were in existence, and that the affidavit of Dr. Samuel R. Wooster, printed near the beginning of this record, fully answers them, and shows General Alger's record to have been, in fact, absolutely straight and his conduct entirely correct. General Custer's statement that Alger should be censured because he had been misinformed as to the terms of a railroad time table is at least frivolous and seems not less so when viewed in the light of the fact that the command was not in active service.

The documents printed above comprise the only applications to be relieved ever made by Colonel Alger and furnish all the basis there is for General Custer's report that he had made application for leave "three times." They show the falsity of that statement, and they show that Colonel Alger was never absent from his command for a moment without good cause and proper authority.

General Custer's report says: "I first heard of him again as stopping at the Eutaw House in Baltimore, Md." General Alger, members having gone to the Eutaw House, as trains were then running very irregularly, but here is a certificate from the office of Hospital Medical Department, dated Annapolis, Sept. 18, 1864, which says up to the whole matter and shows conclusively the date at which Alger left the Annapolis hospital. The document, which General Alger has fortunately preserved, and the original of which is

in possession of THE TRIBUNE, is as follows:

**OFFICERS' HOSPITAL, MIDDLE DEPT., Annapolis, Md., Sept. 5, 1864.**  
This is to certify that Col. R. A. Alger of 5th Regiment Mich. Cav., joined this hospital Aug. 30, 1864, and that he left hospital Sept. 5, 1864, to report to Washington, D. C., by order of Colonel A. R. Root. Account for board settled by cash, \$5.00, in accordance with G. O. 127, A. G. O., Washington, March 29, 1864.  
(Signed) Asst. Surgeon U. S. Army, Treasurer Officers' Hospital.

The following official documents complete the record affecting this matter:  
HEADQUARTERS, ANAPOLIS, Md., Sept. 5, 1864.  
Special Orders, No. 203. (Extract.)  
2. In pursuance to instructions received from the War Department, A. G. O., Washington, D. C., the following named officers, at the Officers' Hospital at Annapolis, Md., having been reported by the Surgeon in charge, as being fit for light duty, are hereby ordered to report with out delay, to the Military Governor of the District of Washington, for Court Martial duty.

By order of ADJUTANT R. O. Root, 94 N. Y. Vol. (Signed) JOHN S. WHARTON, Asst. Adj. General.  
WAR DEPARTMENT, ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE, WASHINGTON, September 15, 1864.  
Special Orders, No. 205. (Extract.)  
29. So much of Special Orders, No. 203, September 5, 1864, from Headquarters, Annapolis, Maryland, as, pursuant to instructions from this office, directed the following named officers to report to the Military Governor of the District of Washington, for court martial duty, is hereby confirmed:

ADJUTANT R. A. ALGER, Fifth Michigan Cavalry.  
By order of the Secretary of War, (Signed) E. D. TOWNSEND, Asst. Adj. General.  
Colonel R. A. Alger, Through Colonel Wiswell, Military Governor.  
It will be noticed that Colonel Alger reported for duty August 12, 1864, remaining in the field until sent to hospital at Annapolis on Aug. 28, and that General Custer's endorsement, quoted above, was made September 19, a month and four days subsequent to the date of his departure from the field. He is absolutely no foundation for the charge that Colonel Alger endeavored to shirk any duty or that he was ever absent from his command without proper authority.

**REASON FOR WHICH ALGER RESIGNED AND Official Record in That Connection.**  
Colonel Alger is reported to resign from the army more than a month previous to the time when he actually did so, and he found good reason to do so in the following described condition of military operations as affecting his command. Referring to that time, General Alger says: "At the time I was ordered to resign from my command of Petersburg, to the Shenandoah Valley, it was generally believed by many of the officers and men of the command that they were going to the Shenandoah Valley to watch raiders, that being a convenient way to come down the valley to invade Pennsylvania and Maryland, and it was also known to be an excellent time to procure provisions for the operations about Petersburg, having become a state of siege rather than the scene of active operations. My private business at that time was such that when in Washington I decided to retire from the service and attend to my business affairs, as what little I had was in danger of being lost by my absence. I therefore, being simply temporarily relieved from detached service, sent through my member of Congress, Honorable F. W. Kellogg, to the President, my resignation."

General Alger has placed this document in the hands of THE TRIBUNE, and it reads as follows:  
HEADQUARTERS 5TH MICHIGAN CAVALRY, Washington, 6 Aug. 1864.  
Hon. E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War.  
Sir—

I have the honor herewith to tender my resignation as Colonel of this regiment.

My reasons are that I have been in the military service of the U. S. nearly three years, having enlisted in August, 1861, and have been off duty but eight days except on account of sickness, of those eight days being on account of sickness.

If my private business at home has become such and such condition that it is necessary to attend to it is necessary in order to enable me to save anything from it. I have the honor to be, very respectfully,  
(Signed) R. A. ALGER, Col. Comdg.

President Lincoln endorsed this paper as follows:  
Let this resignation be accepted.  
(Signed) A. LINCOLN, Aug. 8, 1864.

It will be noticed that the date of this acceptance is a month and eight days earlier than the date of his resignation, which was tendered upon September 16th.

The endorsement just quoted is in President Lincoln's own hand-writing, and the original document is, as before stated, in THE TRIBUNE'S possession. Colonel Alger put this accepted resignation in his pocket, intending to present it to the Secretary of War and go home to attend to his business affairs. But learning, after leaving the President, that there was prospect of an active campaign in the Valley, he did not present the resignation at the War Department, but hastily arranging his business as well as possible started for the scene of operations, arriving on account of his misinformation as to the time of the departure of the train, one day late. It will be seen that with an accepted resignation in his pocket he need not have resigned.

Colonel Alger is reported to have been ported to his brigade commander at all if he had decided to leave the service at that time. He had only to present the resignation to the Secretary of War to be relieved entirely of further service and to procure his honorable discharge. The cruelty and injustice of the report of General Custer and of the recommendations of both Custer and Merritt, under these circumstances, there was no justification for them, and the evidence that Alger acted from motives of the highest patriotism and with the courage that characterized his whole military career, is simply irrefragable.

**The Final Resignation.**  
Colonel Alger did not resign in August, therefore, as he had intended, but went to the front. Nearly six weeks later he tendered

his resignation, and the reasons for his action at this time are succinctly stated in the document itself, which is herewith printed:

WASHINGTON, D. C., 16th September, 1864.  
Hon. E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War.  
Sir—I have the honor to tender herewith my resignation as Colonel of the 5th Michigan Cavalry, for the following reasons:

1st. I entered the service, enlisting August 28th, 1861, and have never had a leave of absence, except when wounded.

2d. My private business is in such an unsettled condition that unless I can be at home in October to settle it, I shall be obliged to sacrifice what I have, as nothing has been done with it, since August 28th, when I was sent to hospital at Annapolis, since which time I have been ordered here for light duty, where I am now serving.

3d. Since entering the service I have participated in sixty-seven battles and skirmishes. I have been wounded twice.

I have the honor, Sir, to be very respectfully,  
(Signed) R. A. ALGER, Col. 5th Mich. Cavalry.  
INDORSEMENTS IN THE RECORDS.  
WASHINGTON, 18th Sept. 1864.  
Let this resignation be accepted.  
(Signed) A. LINCOLN.

Sept. 17, 1864. Accepted.  
(Signed) EDWIN M. STANTON, Sec. of War.  
Sept. 19, 1864. WAR DEPARTMENT, ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE, WASHINGTON.  
September 20th, 1864.  
Special Orders, No. 311. (Extract.)  
Col. R. A. Alger, 5th Michigan Cavalry, having tendered his resignation, is hereby honorably discharged from the service of the United States.

**High Praise From Custer.**  
HEADQUARTERS 2ND BRIGADE, 3rd Division Cavalry Corps, Army of the Potomac, Oct. 19, 1863. Hon. E. M. Stanton, Secy of War. Sir—I have the honor to recommend to you for promotion to the rank of Brigadier-General, Colonel Russell A. Alger, of the 5th Michigan Cavalry, for meritorious conduct in the field, as also for his thorough discipline in his Regt., both in camp and on the march; and for his efforts for the welfare of his Regt., and the good of the service. Col. Alger has proved himself worthy of the highest confidence. At Halloway, Gettysburg, where he led his Regt. in the most gallant manner, he showed great bravery and skill. Hagerstown, Williamsport and Boonsboro, July 8th, where he was severely wounded, he showed his gallantry. In one of the severest cavalry engagements of the war, Colonel Alger distinguished himself for his bravery, coolness and skill, which particularly shows his fitness for a cavalry commander.

Since recovering from his wound at Culpepper, Racon Fort, Brandy Station on the 14th inst., he has been in the front ranks, and has distinguished himself alike for his bravery and skill, showing his competency in every respect for a command, and for the cavalry service. As an officer and as a man, Colonel Alger justly enjoys the highest esteem of both his command and his commanding officers.

Ever ready to perform his duty at any and all times, and zealous in the cause for which we are fighting, he has proved himself worthy of the highest confidence of all. I therefore recommend him to your consideration, fully believing that your trust to him will be skillfully and faithfully performed by him, with honor to himself and credit to his command, and to the noble cause in which we are engaged.

I have the honor to be, Sir, Very respectfully, your obt. servt., (Signed) G. A. CUSTER, Brig. Genl. Vols.

**Indorsements From High Officers.**  
[Indorsements on the foregoing.]  
HEADQUARTERS Third Cav. Div., Oct. 20, 1863. I have witnessed the gallantry and skill of Col. Alger in the field, and in many other occasions. His prompt and energetic action yesterday saved a large portion of my command from being captured, which would have resulted in the loss of the entire command. They were at one time thrown. I most cheerfully indorse the recommendation of Brig. Gen. Custer, believing Col. Alger to be in every respect worthy of the position to which he has been named.  
(Signed) J. KILPATRICK, Brig. Genl. Vols. Comdg. HEADQUARTERS CAVALRY CORPS, Oct. 20, 1863.

This recommendation is respectfully forwarded, and most favorably recommended. Col. Alger is a gallant and energetic cavalry commander. His services in that capacity are much needed in this corps.  
(Signed) A. PLEASANTON, Brig. Genl. Comdg. HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, Oct. 22, 1863.

Respectfully forwarded with the remark that this recommendation has been sent in without any call from me for recommendation for the appointment of Brig. General.  
(Signed) G. A. CUSTER, Brig. Genl. Comdg. HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, Oct. 22, 1863.